

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 490

By Dickerson

A RESOLUTION to commend James H. Fyke for his honorable  
and astute service to the people of Tennessee.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the members of this General Assembly should pause to  
specially recognize those estimable public servants who have dedicated themselves to  
improving the quality of life for their fellow citizens; and

WHEREAS, James "Jim" H. Fyke is one such person who has laudably served the good  
people of Tennessee throughout his illustrious career in parks and recreation management and  
environmental conservation; and

WHEREAS, a native of Old Hickory, Jim Fyke was involved in recreation and sports  
activities from a young age; he excelled at basketball at DuPont High School, where he was an  
all-state guard who helped his team reach the state championship tournament in 1957; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Fyke earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in Business Management from  
the Peabody College of Vanderbilt University; and

WHEREAS, after working as an accountant for a few years after college, Jim Fyke  
changed his professional trajectory by becoming Nashville's first full-time sports administrator in  
1964; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Fyke distinguished himself in his chosen field during thirty-nine years of  
service to the Metropolitan Nashville Board of Parks and Recreation, twenty-five years of which  
he was Parks Director. Before his retirement in 2003, he led the Metro parks system to almost  
double in size, increasing from fifty-seven parks and a total area of 5,800 acres to 100 parks  
with 10,237 acres, and he oversaw the \$18 million restoration of the Parthenon at Centennial  
Park in 2001–2002; and

WHEREAS, throughout his illustrious tenure at its helm, the Metro parks system won numerous accolades, while Jim Fyke himself earned a reputation as an effective manager and devoted steward of public lands; and

WHEREAS, in April 2003, Jim Fyke accepted employment with the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation as Deputy Commissioner of Parks and Conservation, in which capacity he developed the Five Year State Recreation Plan in 2004, headed the Governor's Land Conservation Initiative in 2005, accomplished the reopening of fourteen state parks and facilities that had been previously closed, and reorganized the management structure to make it more responsive to local communities' needs; and

WHEREAS, his unswerving dedication compelled him to visit each of Tennessee's fifty-four state parks within one year of becoming Deputy Commissioner of Parks and Conservation so that he might better understand and fulfill his duties; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Fyke estimably served as Commissioner of the Department of Environment and Conservation from 2005 to 2011, in which capacity he performed a pivotal advisory role in addressing land conservation issues and the establishment of the Tennessee Heritage Conservation Trust Fund, an initiative to promote conservation partnerships between public and private parties; and

WHEREAS, an effective role model in the protection and improvement of Tennessee's precious natural, cultural, and historic resources, Jim Fyke guided the State's park system to the highest level of achievement, as it was selected as the recipient of the National Recreation and Park Association's 2007 Gold Medal Award for Excellence in Park and Recreation Management, which is the highest honor a park system can receive and recognizes exceptional long-range planning, resource management, citizen support systems, environmental stewardship, and program and professional development; and

WHEREAS, an integral participant in the advancement of his profession and the parks and recreation community, Mr. Fyke has served on many directory boards, including those of the Tennessee Valley Authority Resource Stewardship Council, the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Commission, the Nashville Sports Council, and the Nashville Predators Foundation; and

WHEREAS, no stranger to awards and acclaim for his many contributions in the realm of parks and recreation in Tennessee, Jim Fyke has received numerous honors, including the 1982 Fellow Award, the Friends of Warner Parks' 2001 Best Friend Award, the Nashville Sports Council's 2001 Lifetime Achievement Award, the 2002 Youth Incorporated Award, the Nashville Tree Foundation's 2003 Best Friend Award, the Tennessee Golf Foundation's 2003 Person of the Year Award, Toastmasters International's 2005 Communication and Leadership Award, the Tennessee Wildlife Federation's 2007 Conservationist of the Year, Friends of Radnor Lake's 2008 Environmental Award, induction into the Metro Nashville Public School Hall of Fame for Lifetime Achievement in 2011, and the Governor's 2013 Lifetime Achievement Award for Environment and Conservation Stewardship; and

WHEREAS, in recognition of his many contributions, Nashville Metro Parks renamed its Centennial offices, the James H. Fyke Parks and Recreation Administration Complex in 2015; and

WHEREAS, his many accomplishments aside, Mr. Fyke is perhaps most grateful for the love and companionship he shares with his wife, Becky; his three children, Claire Purcell, Rebecca Bryant, and Ryan Malloy; and his eight grandchildren, Kacey, Joshua, Andrew, Addalyn, Eliana, Pax, Madeline, and Brynna; and

WHEREAS, Jim Fyke epitomizes the spirit and commitment that are characteristic of a true Tennessean; and

WHEREAS, this General Assembly finds it appropriate to pause in its deliberations to acknowledge and applaud Mr. Fyke for his profound dedication to the State of Tennessee and its citizens; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED NINTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we hereby honor and commend James "Jim" H. Fyke for his meritorious service to the good people of Tennessee as an outstanding advocate of public lands, parks, and recreation and salute his unswerving commitment to living the examined life with courage and conviction.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.